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ABSTRACT

This report is a summary of a variety of educational services offered by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) supported television stations as reported in CPB's annual Station Activities Survey (1998). Highlights from the data include: 141 stations (80% of all CPB supported stations) provide educational services to elementary or secondary schools; the number of stations offering the "Ready to Learn" service on PBS increased by 77% from last year--this service now reaches over 52,000 schools; and half of all stations offer General Equivalency Degree (GED) programs, and 10% offer the program in Spanish, which impacts over 51,000 students. Five charts provide statistics, according to license type and budget size, on: grantees offering instructional programming to schools; number of school districts, buildings and teachers utilizing programming; grantees providing services to schools; and grantees offering GED programs. (Author/AEF)

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Elementary and Secondary Educational Services of Public Television Grantees:

Highlights from the 1998 Station Activities Survey

Public television stations play a vital role in providing instructional services to both elementary and secondary schools, as well as other educational institutions. As a group, their educational programming is utilized by over 1.7 millions teachers in nearly 12,000 school districts in the United States.

The following is a summary of a variety of educational services offered by CPB supported television stations as reported in CPB's annual Station Activities Survey. For analysis purposes, stations are broken into cohorts by license type and budget size.

The following are some highlights from the data analyzed:

- *One hundred and forty one stations, or eighty percent of all CPB supported stations provide educational services to elementary or secondary schools.*
- *The number of stations offering The Ready to Learn service on PBS increased by 77 percent from last year This service now reaches over 52,000 school buildings.*
- *Half of all stations offer General Equivalency Degree (G.E.D) programs, and ten percent offer the program in Spanish. This impacts over 51,000 students.*

Provision of Instructional Programming to Elementary and Secondary Schools

The 1998 Station Activities Survey asked public televisions stations whether they provided instructional programming to elementary or secondary schools or other educational institutions during the 1996-97 academic year, and if so, what means were used to deliver the programs.

Approximately 80 percent of all stations provided programming to both elementary and secondary schools (140 and 141 stations, respectively; see chart I). As in previous years, the most popular means of delivery was the full-power broadcast channel, which is used by over 70 percent of stations that provided instructional programming. Separately programmed cable channels and ITFS services are each utilized by approximately 15 percent of all stations who provide instructional programming.

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Stations with smaller operating budgets were slightly less likely to provide programming to schools than stations with larger budgets; 75 percent of stations with budgets under $2.5 million provided instructional programming compared to over 80 percent of stations with budgets over $6.0 million.

Use of Instructional Programming by Schools

Stations were asked to provide estimates of the number of school districts, buildings and teachers that utilize the instructional programming provided by the station (see chart II). Since some stations may not have exact data available for this series of questions, they were asked to provide their best estimates. Stations that still did not respond (7.5 percent of stations that provide instructional programming), are not included in the following analysis.

Public television stations reported that a median of 39 school districts, 260 school buildings and 6,000 teachers used instructional programs they provided during fiscal year 1997. Not surprisingly, larger stations tend to serve significantly more districts and schools, with medians of 107 and 697, respectively.

Services to Schools

From a list of 11 possible services, stations were asked to indicate which services they provided to schools during the academic year 1996-97 (see chart III). Only eight stations responded that they provided no services to schools. As in past years, the most popular services continue to be providing advance schedules of both general audience (84 percent of stations) and instructional programs (75 percent of stations), followed by previews of instructional programs offered by 56 percent of stations. Of the three services, only previews of instructional programs experienced a decline in availability from the 1995-96 academic year, when 61 percent of stations provided this service. The least provided services among all stations were the tape lending library, electronic access to curriculum guides and teacher and/or student awards programs, which were each offered by 36 percent of stations.

These data underscore the fact that public broadcasting stations are continually striving to expand their already significant educational services. Such is the case at KOCE in Huntington Beach, California, where they began broadcasting 24 hours a day in September of 1997 in order to provide more broadcast time for educational activities.

National and Other Initiatives

Stations were asked to report their current and planned involvement in a series of educational initiatives (see chart IV). As was indicated would be the case in last year's survey, 60 percent of stations now offer The Ready to Learn Service on PBS. This is up from 34 percent in fiscal year 1996, and translates into an additional 46 stations now offering the service. Among these stations are WJCT in Jacksonville, Florida, KUAT in Tucson, Arizona and KEET in Eureka, Georgia. Some stations conduct Ready to Learn workshops in specific communities, such as WETA in Washington, DC, which conducted workshops in the Latino community. Additionally, 12 percent of stations not currently offering The Ready to Learn Service are planning to do so in either fiscal year 1998 or 1999. Other children's outreach services are offered by 67 percent of stations, but are only expected to grow by another 5 percent of stations during the next two fiscal years. Both of these services are found more predominantly among community and larger licensees. As has been pointed out in previous education research notes, one reason for this is that some institutional licensees (particularly colleges and universities) may be precluded from offering ready to learn services during the day due to conflicts with licensee-related programming, such as college telecourses.

The next most popular service, offered by 56 percent of stations, was utilization support for teachers using technology. The availability of PBS Mathline has declined from 39 percent of stations in fiscal year 1996 to 31 percent in fiscal year 1997.

General Equivalency Degree (G.E.D.) Programs

Half of CPB supported stations offered General Equivalency Degree (G.E.D.) programs during the 1996-97 academic year. New to this year's survey was a question regarding the availability of G.E.D. programs offered in Spanish. Eighteen stations (10 percent) offered this program, including KMBH in Harlington, Texas and WHUT in Washington, DC. Of these eighteen stations, thirteen were community licensees. Stations that reported offering G.E.D. programs were asked to provide an estimate of the number of students enrolled. Eighteen stations that offer a G.E.D. program did not answer this question; data from those stations have been eliminated from the following analysis, and the results should be interpreted with caution. Stations reported total enrollment in G.E.D. programs to be 51,312 students. Although this total is slightly higher than last year's total enrollment, the median enrollment has declined from 200 students in academic year 1995-96 to 174 in 1996-97. Larger institutional licensees had by far the greatest number of enrollees, accounting for 44 percent of the total enrollment among all stations. Of the total enrollment of 51,312 students, 2,237 students, or four percent, were enrolled in Spanish G.E.D. programs. Again, this was primarily found among community licensees, where 1,618 students took part in G.E.D. programs offer in Spanish.

Technology

Public broadcasters continue to be at the forefront of integrating technology into the learning experience. Many stations have launched creative initiatives aimed at educating students and teachers alike on how to best utilize available technology. At Louisiana Public Broadcasting's National Teacher Training Institute, 125 teachers learned how to incorporate public television programs and technology into their lessons. The New Jersey Network began an innovative new series called "Tomorrow's Classrooms Today" that focuses on strategies for using technology in the classroom. And at KRWG in Las Cruses, New Mexico, the news department has initiated "Youth 22," a program which encourages area schools with television equipment to submit stories to News 22.

Conclusions

Public television's commitment towards providing educational services that truly benefit the community remains strong. This is evident through the continued support of established instructional services, as well as newer services such as General Equivalency Degree Programs offered in Spanish, and innovative initiatives designed to take advantage of technology.

If you have any questions about these data, please refer them to Robert Bailey at 202/879-9672 or rbailey@cpb.org. We also welcome any comments and recommendations about how to make the data more useful to you.

Chart I
Highlights of Public Television Educational Activities from the 1998 Station Activities Survey
1996-97 Academic Year
Grantees Offering Instructional Programming to Schools
By License Type and Budget Size

	Community Licensees				Institutional Licensees				All Licensees			
Operating Budget Size	Small	Medium	Large	Total	Small	Medium	Large	Total	Small	Medium	Large	Total
Number of grantees in category	29	28	31	88	26	32	31	89	55	60	62	177
Instructional programming to elementary schools:												
No Programming	5	3	8	16	9	9	3	21	14	12	11	37
Percent of total grantees	17%	11%	26%	18%	35%	28%	10%	24%	25%	20%	18%	21%
Programming on full-power broadcast channel(s)	23	23	20	66	16	19	27	62	39	42	47	128
Percent of total grantees	79%	82%	65%	75%	62%	59%	87%	70%	71%	70%	76%	72%
Programming on separate cable channel(s)	5	6	5	16	4	6	1	11	9	12	6	27
Percent of total grantees	17%	21%	16%	18%	15%	19%	3%	12%	16%	20%	10%	15%
Programming on ITFS channel(s)	3	6	8	17	2	3	5	10	5	9	13	27
Percent of total grantees	10%	21%	26%	19%	8%	9%	16%	11%	9%	15%	21%	15%
Instructional programming to secondary schools:												
No Programming	6	4	9	19	8	6	3	17	14	10	12	36
Percent of total grantees	21%	14%	29%	22%	31%	19%	10%	19%	25%	17%	19%	20%
Programming on full-power broadcast channel(s)	21	21	19	61	17	22	27	66	38	43	46	127
Percent of total grantees	72%	75%	61%	69%	65%	69%	87%	74%	69%	72%	74%	72%
Programming on separate cable channel(s)	6	5	5	16	4	7	2	13	10	12	7	29
Percent of total grantees	21%	18%	16%	18%	15%	22%	6%	15%	18%	20%	11%	16%
Programming on ITFS channel(s)	3	5	8	16	2	3	5	10	5	8	13	26
Percent of total grantees	10%	18%	26%	18%	8%	9%	16%	11%	9%	13%	21%	15%

Note: Operating budget size is defined as follows: Small: Less than $2.5 million. Medium: $2.5 to $6.0 million. Large: Over $6.0 million.

Chart II

Highlights of Public Television Educational Activities from the 1998 Station Activities Survey

1996-97 Academic Year

Number of School Districts, Buildings and Teachers Utilizing Programming

By License Type and Budget Size

	Community Licensees				Institutional Licensees				All Licensees			
Operating Budget Size	Small	Medium	Large	Total	Small	Medium	Large	Total	Small	Medium	Large	Total
Number of grantees in category	29	28	31	88	26	32	31	89	55	60	62	177
Median number of school districts served	17	28	95	34	35	30	162	44	20	29	107	39
Number of grantees reporting on districts	24	25	22	71	17	25	26	68	41	50	48	139
Percent of total grantees	83%	89%	71%	81%	65%	78%	84%	76%	75%	83%	77%	79%
Median number of school buildings served	138	250	500	208	127	245	956	411	136	250	697	260
Number of grantees reporting on buildings	24	25	21	70	14	26	28	68	38	51	49	138
Percent of total grantees	83%	89%	68%	80%	54%	81%	90%	76%	69%	85%	79%	78%
Median number of teachers served	2400	6299	15500	5500	2800	3794	25280	7250	2500	5900	19600	6000
Number of grantees reporting on teachers	24	25	22	71	15	27	26	68	39	52	48	139
Percent of total grantees	83%	89%	71%	81%	58%	84%	84%	76%	71%	87%	77%	79%

Note: Operating budget size is defined as follows: Small: Less than $2.5 million. Medium: $2.5 to $6.0 million. Large: Over $6.0 million.

Chart III

Highlights of Public Television Educational Activities from the 1998 Station Activities Survey

1996-97 Academic Year

Grantees Providing Services to Schools

By License Type and Budget Size

	Community Licensees				Institutional Licensees				All Licensees			
Operating Budget Size	Small	Medium	Large	Total	Small	Medium	Large	Total	Small	Medium	Large	Total
Number of grantees in category	29	28	31	88	26	32	31	89	55	60	62	177
No services provided	2	0	2	4	0	3	1	4	2	3	3	8
Percent of total grantees	7%	0%	6%	5%	0%	9%	3%	4%	4%	5%	5%	5%
Previews of instructional programs	14	18	19	51	10	14	25	49	24	32	44	100
Percent of total grantees	48%	64%	61%	58%	38%	44%	81%	55%	44%	53%	71%	56%
Advance schedules of general audience programs	23	27	22	72	21	27	28	76	44	54	50	148
Percent of total grantees	79%	96%	71%	82%	81%	84%	90%	85%	80%	90%	81%	84%
Advance schedules of instructional programs	17	23	21	61	16	26	29	71	33	49	50	132
Percent of total grantees	59%	82%	68%	69%	62%	81%	94%	80%	60%	82%	81%	75%
Interactive distance education	8	10	16	34	11	15	21	47	19	25	37	81
Percent of total grantees	28%	36%	52%	39%	42%	47%	68%	53%	35%	42%	60%	46%
Tape lending library	11	11	14	36	7	8	13	28	18	19	27	64
Percent of total grantees	38%	39%	45%	41%	27%	25%	42%	31%	33%	32%	44%	36%
Tape dubbing	15	16	13	44	13	11	17	41	28	27	30	85
Percent of total grantees	52%	57%	42%	50%	50%	34%	55%	46%	51%	45%	48%	48%
Electronic access to curriculum guides	3	9	16	28	5	11	20	36	8	20	36	64
Percent of total grantees	10%	32%	52%	32%	19%	34%	65%	40%	15%	33%	58%	36%
Teacher and/or student awards programs	11	12	13	36	4	12	11	27	15	24	24	63
Percent of total grantees	38%	43%	42%	41%	15%	38%	35%	30%	27%	40%	39%	36%
Daytime block feeds of instructional programs	11	10	10	31	7	14	15	36	18	24	25	67
Percent of total grantees	38%	36%	32%	35%	27%	44%	48%	40%	33%	40%	40%	38%
Overnight feeds of instructional programs	6	13	18	37	2	9	21	32	8	22	39	69
Percent of total grantees	21%	46%	58%	42%	8%	28%	68%	36%	15%	37%	63%	39%
Other Services	8	12	12	32	6	6	11	23	14	18	23	55
Percent of total grantees	28%	43%	39%	36%	23%	19%	35%	26%	25%	30%	37%	31%

Note: Operating budget size is defined as follows: Small: Less than $2.5 million. Medium: $2.5 to $6.0 million. Large: Over $6.0 million.

Chart IV

Highlights of Public Television Educational Activities from the 1998 Station Activities Survey

1996-97 Academic Year

Grantees Offering Instructional Programming to Schools

By License Type and Budget Size

	Community Licensees				Institutional Licensees				All Licensees			
Operating Budget Size	Small	Medium	Large	Total	Small	Medium	Large	Total	Small	Medium	Large	Total
Number of grantees in category	29	28	31	88	26	32	31	89	55	60	62	177
Services provided in Fiscal Year 1997:												
The Ready to Learn Service on PBS	16	21	20	57	12	13	24	49	28	34	44	106
Percent of total grantees	55%	75%	65%	65%	46%	41%	77%	55%	51%	57%	71%	60%
Other children's outreach services	16	25	24	65	14	16	24	54	30	41	48	119
Percent of total grantees	55%	89%	77%	74%	54%	50%	77%	61%	55%	68%	77%	67%
PBS Mathline	6	7	13	26	5	11	13	29	11	18	26	55
Percent of total grantees	21%	25%	42%	30%	19%	34%	42%	33%	20%	30%	42%	31%
Utilization support for teachers using technology	10	15	23	48	7	20	24	51	17	35	47	99
Percent of total grantees	34%	54%	74%	55%	27%	63%	77%	57%	31%	58%	76%	56%
Distribution of CPB Teacher's Digest/PBS Teacher Connex	10	14	11	35	3	11	9	23	13	25	20	58
Percent of total grantees	34%	50%	35%	40%	12%	34%	29%	26%	24%	42%	32%	33%
Services planned for Fiscal Year 1998 or 1999:												
The Ready to Learn Service on PBS	5	3	4	12	3	4	2	9	8	7	6	21
Percent of total grantees	17%	11%	13%	14%	12%	13%	6%	10%	15%	12%	10%	12%
Other children's outreach services	6	0	0	6	2	1	0	3	8	1	0	9
Percent of total grantees	21%	0%	0%	7%	8%	3%	0%	3%	15%	2%	0%	5%
PBS Mathline	4	1	3	8	1	1	1	3	5	2	4	11
Percent of total grantees	14%	4%	10%	9%	4%	3%	3%	3%	9%	3%	6%	6%
Utilization support for teachers using technology	6	1	1	8	3	1	1	5	9	2	2	13
Percent of total grantees	21%	4%	3%	9%	12%	3%	3%	6%	16%	3%	3%	7%
Distribution of CPB Teacher's Digest/PBS Teacher Connex	4	2	1	7	6	1	3	10	10	3	4	17
Percent of total grantees	14%	7%	3%	8%	23%	3%	10%	11%	18%	5%	6%	10%

Note: Operating budget size is defined as follows: Small: Less than $2.5 million. Medium: $2.5 to $6.0 million. Large: Over $6.0 million.

Chart V
Highlights of Public Television Educational Activities from the 1998 Station Activities Survey
1996-97 Academic Year
Grantees Offering General Equivalency Degree (G.E.D.) Programs
By License Type and Budget Size

	Community Licensees				Institutional Licensees				All Licensees			
Operating Budget Size	Small	Medium	Large	Total	Small	Medium	Large	Total	Small	Medium	Large	Total
Number of grantees in category	29	28	31	88	26	32	31	89	55	60	62	177
Number of grantees offering G.E.D. program	15	21	13	49	6	15	18	39	21	36	31	88
Percent of total grantees	52%	75%	42%	56%	23%	47%	58%	44%	38%	60%	50%	50%
Number of grantees offering G.E.D. program in English	15	21	13	49	6	15	18	39	21	36	31	88
Percent of total grantees	52%	75%	42%	56%	23%	47%	58%	44%	38%	60%	50%	50%
Number of grantees offering G.E.D. program in Spanish	4	2	7	13	1	3	1	5	5	5	8	18
Percent of total grantees	14%	7%	23%	15%	4%	9%	3%	6%	9%	8%	13%	10%
Median enrollment in G.E.D. program	100	179	262	129	92	94	778	189	96	110	400	174
Total enrollment in G.E.D. program	6,118	9,787	4,787	20,692	1,132	6,891	22,597	30,620	7,250	16,678	27,384	51,312
Median enrollment in English G.E.D. program	100	177	262	127	92	94	778	177	96	110	389	160
Total enrollment in English G.E.D. program	5297	9,713	4,064	19,074	1,132	6,272	22,597	30,001	6,429	15,985	26,661	49,075
Median enrollment in Spanish G.E.D. program	25	37	121	48	0	50	0	50	25	50	121	50
Total enrollment in Spanish G.E.D. program	821	74	723	1,618	0	619	0	619	821	693	723	2,237

Median and total enrollments exclude data for 18 grantees that offered G.E.D. programs but were unable to provide enrollment figures.

Note: Operating budget size is defined as follows: Small: Less than $2.5 million. Medium: $2.5 to $6.0 million. Large: Over $6.0 million.